

REMARKS

In the non-final Office Action, the Examiner requested a copy of the executed Oath and Power of Attorney; objected to claims 2-4, 9, and 18 for various informalities; rejected claims 1 and 16-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Barham et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,721,371); rejected claims 5-7 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Barham et al. in view of Quigley et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,650,624); rejected claims 14 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Barham et al. in view of Quigley et al. and Peyrovian (U.S. Patent No. 5,768,682); and rejected claims 9-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Barham et al. in view of Quigley et al. and Applicant's admitted prior art in Fig. 17(A). The Examiner objected to claims 2-4 and 8 as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten to include the features of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By this Amendment, Applicant provides a copy of the executed Oath and Power of Attorney (attached), cancels claims 2, 11, and 18-21 without prejudice or disclaimer, amends claims 1, 3-6, 8-10, 12, 16, 22, and 23 to improve form, and adds new claims 24-40. Claims 1, 3-10, 12-17, and 22-40 are pending.

Applicant has amended the claims to address the various informalities identified by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the objection to the claims be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Applicant has amended claim 1 to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 2. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is in condition for immediate allowance by the Examiner. Claims 3-10, 12-17, 22, and 23 depend from claim 1 and are, therefore, also in condition for immediate allowance by the Examiner.

New claim 24 is a system claim corresponding to the method claim of claim 1. Therefore, claim 24 is in condition for immediate allowance by the Examiner. Claims 25-40 depend from claim 24 and are, therefore, also in condition for immediate allowance by the Examiner.

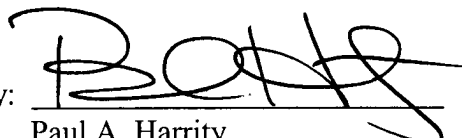
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner's reconsideration of the application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

If the Examiner believes that the application is not now in condition for allowance, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned to discuss any outstanding issues.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 35 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1070 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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PATENT
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ATTACHMENT: EXECUTED OATH AND POWER OF ATTORNEY